

The Washington Scene

Effective Foreign Aid

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Washington

We'll be hearing a lot about foreign-aid programs this spring. The new Eisenhower budget calls for \$4,350,000,000 in foreign military and economic aid for fiscal 1958. Perhaps this year, with all the likely debate, we can get more clearly in mind what foreign aid is all about.

The business of administering an effective aid program is an intricate, skilled profession. Americans in general, and some members of Congress in particular, whose automatic reaction to the words "foreign aid" is to think of "operation rathole," or "dogoodism and waste," or "no foreign aid whatsoever," or "no grants, only loans," may find that there's more to the subject than snap generalizations.

Certainly the subject is receiving a lot of official attention. Congress has set up two foreign-aid studies. President Eisenhower appointed the Fairless Citizens Committee on Foreign Assistance Programs, and its report is due March 1. Max F. Millikan and W. W. Rostow of the Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, have written extensively on policy toward the underdeveloped countries. Paul G. Hoffman, former Marshall Plan administrator, has advanced useful new ideas.

When the Fairless committee report is in, the President is expected to send a special foreign-aid message to Congress in support of his budgetary request. With some members of Congress up in arms over the size of the budget, the foreign-aid program is likely to be singled out for special attention by the pruning shears.

What should be the purpose of our foreign-aid program? Manifestly it has to serve the interests of the United States in an intelligent way. President Eisenhower has said that "one-third of all mankind has entered upon a historic struggle for a new freedom: freedom from grinding poverty." Many people think that the whole four-billion-dollar aid program would be

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backward countries. Actually, of the \$3,776,000,000 budgeted for foreign aid in fiscal 1957, only \$350,000,000 was for economic development—just about one-tenth.

The rest went into military assistance and defense support. It went toward maintaining South Korea's military divisions, bolstering South Vietnam's armed strength, bulwarking the army-strained Turkish economy. These were necessary measures. But they weren't economic development.

We are all aware that Moscow and the Communists are at work among the under-



'Can That Be Hitched to a Plow?'

developed, emergent peoples. They offer a utopia achieved by Marxist methods. We prefer not to have communism capture this undecided one-third of mankind. But how do we prevent this—by signing up the new nations in military pacts of allegiance to us and the West? Suppose they don't want to sign up?

The real, the achievable long-range aim of foreign aid is to build independent, stalwart nations out of these emergent countries. A hint as to how it can be done was illustrated dramatically the other day in Iraq, in the Middle East. Iraq, though an Arab nation, has stood firm in maintaining its Western connections. Egypt and Syria, with propaganda and subversion, have sought to topple Iraq's pro-Western government. Iraq hasn't toppled, even with the turmoil over Suez.

under way (financed by its own oil revenues). Says the London Economist: "Demonstrations of the classic anti-Western type, once so easily engineered by a quick whip around the slums, have become more difficult for the usual agents to organize, because men earning 15 shillings (unskilled) to 30 shillings (skilled) a day are buying watches and radios and are no longer willing to risk a broken head or a spell in jail."

These Iraqis had new interests—irrigation, new housing, bridge building—something better to do than to riot against a departed colonialism. And that, as Messrs. Millikan and Rostow comment, suggests the aim of any enlightened foreign-aid program. The objective should be to awaken hope and interest about the future, to show that improved living standards are attainable by hard work, to shift thought to constructive allegiances.

In India, for instance, election candidates debate as to who has done most to further India's five-year plan. In some other countries, the sterile election debate still concerns: Who did the most in ousting the Dutch, or the French?

The Arab lands aren't easily budged from old attitudes. But here an imaginative approach might work wonders: such as the establishment of an Arab League redevelopment bank for making development loans to the entire Middle East. King Saud might be persuaded to invest his oil revenues in this bank instead of into Colonel Nasser's propaganda drives.

One way or another, we are going to hear a lot about foreign development programs in the months ahead. Foreign aid is part of the Eisenhower Doctrine for the Middle East. France has proposed a Eurafrika development. West Germany aims to work more with backward nations. The United Nations has its own "Point Four" program. It would be well if we could discover what John Hollister, Director of the International Development Administration, is taking an

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